

To what extent does Norwegian leaders wish to have older workers employed?

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Background

In Norway like the rest of Europe it is a political goal to prolong working life. This is due to the need of workers to do the services we need, to finance the sustainability of pensions and welfare services. It is also very important for the quality of life of many individuals. The OECD (2020) show that to keep the employment rate on the same level as in 2020, the working age must increase with four years within 2050. This implies that an increasing number will also have to work after the age of 70. The aim of the work presented here is to contribute to the knowledge of how prepared Norwegian working life is. This insight can be useful in different parts of working life, such as trade unions and the HR-departments.

The leaders of the workplaces influence the opportunities of achieving this goal a lot. The aim of this study is to investigate if the leaders prioritize late work exit in their companies. Most of the effort to encourage older workers to prolong working life has been put on incentives on the worker through changes in the pension system. However, the desire to work in older ages is also highly connected with being wanted to continue by the nearest leader. Attitudes, behavior, and measures in the businesses may influence the choice between work and retirement significantly.

Research question

To what extent does Norwegian leaders prioritize long working careers?

Data & methods

The analyses are based on The Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer (NSPB) 2023. This is a survey among 1200 leaders in Norwegian firms. 600 in firms with 10 employees or more in private sector and 600 in public sector. Details about NSPB can be found in Lie, L.E. with colleagues (2023).

- What characterize leaders who answer more positively/negatively to this question?
- Do the leaders that are more positive to retain workers to a larger extent have strategies to retain and develop their older workers?



To investigate what characterizes leaders who are more positive/negative, we look at significant differences in responses in the survey data. In the analysis of whether businesses with leaders who are more positive towards keeping people until they are 70 are more likely to have a strategy for retaining and developing senior employees, I have examined bivariate correlations. In the further analyses, multivariate regression analysis will be used.

Fig. 1. To what extent do you wish that workers should stay in your company until they are 70 years of age?

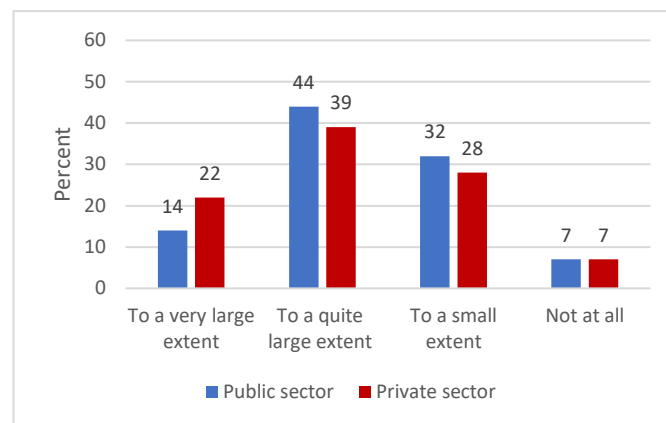
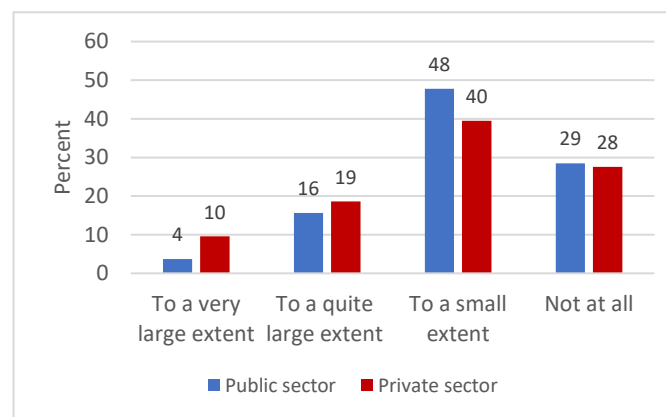


Fig. 2. To what extent do you wish that workers should stay in your company after they are 70 years of age?



Results

Around 6 out of 10 Norwegian leaders would wish to a very large or quite large extent that employees should continue working in the organization until they are 70 years old.

When asked to what extent they wish for employees to continue after they have turned 70 years old, only 20 percent of leaders in the public sector and 30 percent of leaders in the private sector express a very or quite strong desire.

Leaders in the private sector are more positive about employees continuing both until they are 70 years old and after 70 years old.

Preliminary analyses do not indicate that leaders in organizations who are more positive about employees continuing until or after 70 years old are more likely to have a strategy for retaining and further developing their older employees.

Conclusion

A majority of Norwegian leaders express positive attitude to retaining workers to the age of 70. However, wishes to retain older workers seem to be unrelated to having strategies for retaining older workers.

Further work:

In my further work, I wish to delve deeper into the data and analyze the use of measures to retain and further develop senior employees. In the further analyses, I aim to explore whether the variation in the desire for older employees to continue until they are 70 years old or beyond can be explained by industry, sector, age and sex of the leader, number of employees and attitudes.

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